



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC	Advancing the Kingdom of God Jesus' Style	SPEAKER	Elder Goh Hock Chye
THEME	Unstoppable Church	DATE	12 & 13 November 2016

MESSAGE SUMMARY

Advancing the Kingdom of God – Jesus' Style

John 12:12-26 is about advancing the Kingdom of God. In verses 24-26, Jesus tells the people three challenging truths in order to do so. However, with these challenging truths comes three glorious truths. It is all about the posture of our hearts; God will always lead us, but are we willing to surrender to Him?

The Challenging Truths and the Glorious Truths

THE THREE CHALLENGING TRUTHS

1. Jesus calls us to die.

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone...” (v.24)

In the same way, unless we die to self, we cannot advance the Kingdom of God. Dying to self means putting others before ourselves (Phil 2:3, Mark 12:31). This is challenging because we are naturally self-centred.

2. Jesus calls us to hate our lives in this world.

“He who loves his life loses it...” (v.25)

We are not to love our lives in this world – in fact, we are called to hate the lifestyles that this world calls us to. As self-centred beings, it is challenging to denounce a world of comfort and self-love to sacrificially put others first.

3. Jesus calls us to follow and serve Him.

“If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also...”

In v.26, Jesus calls those who want to serve Him to come and follow Him. To obey Him means we are to submit ourselves as servants and serve others. This is difficult because we would much rather be served than to serve.

Elder Hock Chye tells us that the key is to surrender our all to God. He cites Pastor Edmund Chan: “The greatest incongruence in Christianity is wanting God but not surrendering to Him. The most important thing isn’t how committed we are to the battle but how surrendered we are to Him.”

We surrender to the King, not to the situation. What then does it mean to surrender our life to God? It means that we follow *His* leading, we wait for *His* timing, and we trust in the goodness of God’s purpose even when we do not understand the circumstances.

THE THREE GLORIOUS TRUTHS

1. Jesus promises us that we will bear fruit.

"...but if it dies, it bears much fruit." (v.24)

In v.24, Jesus tells us that our death is not in vain. When we die to ourselves and put others above us, we will make a difference in advancing God's kingdom.

2. Jesus promises us that we will find our life and keep it.

"...and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal." (v.25)

In v.25, Jesus tells us that eternal life awaits the one who hates his life in the world. If Christ dwells within us as Master of our lives, we will have eternal life.

3. Jesus promises us that the Father will honour us.

"...if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him." (v.26)

In v.26, Jesus reminds us that God the Father honours the one who serves Christ and follows Him.

CONCLUSION

God did not promise us smooth journeys – in fact, our struggles qualify us for the promises He has given to us. As we move towards advancing the Kingdom of God, consider the example of William Whiting Borden, who lived his life with "No reserves, no retreats, no regrets". We surrender not because we are at the end of the tunnel, but because we are at the start of what we have been called to do for Christ. We did not choose God – rather, God chose us. Are we willing to live out the life that God has chosen us for?

QUESTIONS

To advance the Kingdom of God, Jesus laid out three challenging truths for us. What does it mean to “die to self” and “hate our lives in this world”? What would it take for you to live out these two truths?

The key to fulfil these hard truths victoriously is to surrender our all to God. What is an area which the Lord has placed in your heart to surrender to Him? What are you struggling with in this area?

This sermon marks the start of a new season in BBTC. In what ways is your cell group serving others? What is one practical step you can take to do more – for others in the cell group, in BBTC or in the community around BBTC?